



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Park of
American Samoa

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National Park of American Samoa News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Park Service Helps Usher in the Holidays with National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa—Every year since 1923, there has been a National Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C. Continuing a tradition begun under President Coolidge, the lighting of the National Christmas Tree is a celebration of the holiday season. Though the tree has gone by different names over the years, a series of living and cut trees have decorated the grounds around the White House since President Coolidge's time. In 1954, a "Pathway of Peace" was established featuring smaller, decorated trees—one for each state and territory, including American Samoa. The National Park Service has been responsible for the tree ceremony since 1933.

The current National Christmas Tree replaces another Colorado blue spruce replanted on the Ellipse in 1978. Damaged by a windstorm in February 2011, the 1978 tree was replaced by the current tree the following month. The newest National Christmas Tree measures approximately 26 feet, 4 inches / 8 meters—and growing.

During this year's tree lighting ceremony, President Obama said, "... And this holiday season, let us reaffirm our commitment to each other, as family members, as neighbors, as Americans, regardless of our color creed or faith. Let us remember that we are one, and we are a family ..."

The National Park of American Samoa is connected with this event as one of 397 units within the National Park System. The National Park Service administers a large percentage of the historic buildings and grounds in Washington, D.C., including the White House, Lincoln Memorial, and Washington Monument.

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

The National Park of American Samoa was established in 1988 to preserve the coral reefs, tropical rainforest, archeological and cultural resources, the habitat of fruit bats, and to provide educational opportunities for visitors and residents. National park lands and waters are leased from villages and the American Samoa Government through a long-term agreement with the National Park Service.

For more information about visiting the National Park of American Samoa, call 699-3982, email NPSA_Info@nps.gov, or go to www.nps.gov/npsa. Also, visit the national park's Facebook and Twitter pages.

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